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March 17, 1959

762.00/3-1759

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762.00/3-1759

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The Honorable Robert Murphy
Deputy Under Secretary of State
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Murphy:

I am pleased to enclose for your information a summary report of a consultation on the Berlin situation held on March 6 in Washington and sponsored by The Church Peace Union. At the same time, I am enclosing a copy of a paper by Paul H. Nitze on this subject which is being sent by the courtesy of the author and of the Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research. Mr. Nitze opened the Washington consultation with a summary of the paper enclosed.

Present at the consultation were: Senators John Sherman Cooper and Stuart Symington; Congressmen John Brademas, George S. McGovern, Chester E. Mrow, and Stewart L. Udall; Col. Donald S. Bussey, Dr. Jay Cerf, William Glancy, Dr. Taylor Cole, Dr. Robert C. Good, Dean Ernest S. Griffith, Msgr. George G. Higgins, Dr. Roger Hilsman, Dr. Evron M. Kirkpatrick, Dr. Ernest W. Leffever, Dr. A. William Loos, Col. Charles L. Marburg, Charles B. Marshall, Dr. William Lee Miller, Dr. Hans J. Morgenthau, Paul H. Nitze, Dr. Kenneth W. Thompson, and Dr. Arnold Wolfers.

While our Washington consultations are strictly off the record, it was suggested by participants that a brief summary report might be useful to members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and key persons in the Department of State.

It should be noted that the summary should be accepted as a contribution to the general discussion of the Berlin situation and not in any sense as the "findings" of the consultation as a whole. No effort was made to arrive at a group consensus.

Sincerely yours,

A. William Loos
Executive Director

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REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

~~CONFIDENTIAL - FOR A GERMAN SETTLEMENT~~
Address before Third Annual Institute of the
World Affairs Council of Milwaukee - Feb. 21, 1959

By
Paul H. Nitze

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To foresee the probable evolution of a situation as intricate as the present one in Germany calls for more than mere familiarity with the problem. No amount of expertise on Germany would allow one to predict whether a German settlement is probable or possible at this time. I shall not try to act as a prophet, but instead propose to explore with you certain elements of the problem that may throw light on the issues involved in dealing with it wisely.

I should think that we could agree that there are three principal elements. The first is the situation in Germany itself. This situation has had a long and involved history. It has a certain dynamic of its own. Senator Mansfield in his recent speech before the Senate based his argument on the proposition that German unity is inevitable. He said that "the key question has never been: Will Germany be unified? The question has long been: When and how will Germany be unified?". He implied that the history of the German situation and the dynamics of that situation leaves no possibility for Soviet actions or influence, or for our actions or influence, to halt the process of unification. It is by no means obvious or certain that Senator Mansfield is correct in this judgment. It is therefore necessary to give close consideration to two other elements.

The second element is the question of what the Soviet Union wants to do and can do with respect to Germany and how

it is apt to react to various types of actions we on the Western side might take.

The third element is what we and our allies can do, should do, and are apt to do.

After we have explored these three elements it may be possible to step back and make some kind of a guess as to the prospects for a German settlement.

Let us now go back for a few minutes to the German situation and the dynamics of its history.

At the end of the war there was wide disagreement in the United States, and in the West generally, as to what our attitude toward the German question should be. Many felt that it would be possible in the postwar world to continue the wartime collaboration between the Western allies and Russia. They felt that the main danger to be guarded against was the possibility of some renewed attempt on the part of Germany to establish hegemony on the continent of Europe. Secretary Morgenthau was the most extreme exponent of this point of view, but there were many not so extreme who shared this general thesis. The other group felt that a continuation of wartime collaboration with the Russians would not be possible after the defeat of the German threat - the common danger which alone had made that collaboration possible. They also felt that Germany had been so thoroughly defeated in both its attempts at a German hegemony through force that Germany no longer presented a problem comparable to that of the rising power of the Soviet Union. It was their view that if the rising power of the Soviet Union and its communist associates

was to be balanced, Germany and Japan would have to be brought back promptly into the community of nations as sovereign and independent powers. At the end of the war this second group was, however, in the minority and the main thrust of Western policy was therefore directed to an attempt to continue the wartime collaboration with Russia into the postwar world.

The Soviet Union, however, had quite a different view of the German situation. The history of the Soviet party in Russia and its attitudes toward foreign relations in general have been deeply molded by their historic experiences with the German question. These go back to the early days of Lenin's seizure of power. He and many of his associates thought that the Russian revolution was of minor importance to the communist movement in comparison to the German communist revolution which they anticipated would shortly follow. Their initial experience with foreign relations was with the negotiation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Their first collaboration with a non-communist country was with Germany. With General Seckt they developed secret arrangements for the manufacture of armaments and the training of military cadres by Germany in Russia in circumvention of the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Their first diplomatic relations were with Germany. These led to the Rapallo agreement. In 1939 they negotiated the Hitler-Stalin Pact which led to World War II. In 1941 they felt the full force of German military power in Hitler's attack. As a result of these experiences, the communist leadership has consistently given full weight, and perhaps excess weight, to the importance of the German problem.

At the end of the war Mr. Stalin was clear as to the path he proposed to follow. His program could not be acceptable to the Western powers. Continued collaboration by the Western world would therefore have to be entirely one sided and could not be expected long to continue. Therefore it was important for Russia vigorously to nail down whatever it held in Germany. As a result Germany became divided with Berlin a tenuous enclave within the Soviet sector.

By the spring of 1947 all but the most blind could see what the Russians were up to and that the policy of attempting to continue into the postwar world the wartime collaboration with the Soviet Union was bankrupt. But what new policy could be followed? The only one that was practicable was to merge the U.S., British and French zones, to permit and encourage the creation of the Bonn government, and to restore that part of Germany, not under Russian occupation, to freedom, to sovereignty and to responsible collaboration with its Western neighbors. The German economy was restored by the Marshall Plan. German relations with France improved.

During this entire period, German reunification did not appear to be a practicable short term objective. It was clear that the Russians had no intention whatever of withdrawing from their zone on any terms. German reunification was a long term objective deeply held by the German people. It was vigorously supported by the West. Some of those on the Western side believed that no real security for Europe could be achieved until German reunification was accomplished. Others, who feared the strength of a reunified Germany, saw no prospect of its being

accomplished and therefore no danger in supporting it as an objective.

The first serious consideration of German reunification, as a program rather than merely as an objective, took place after the lifting of the Berlin blockade in May 1949. As a condition to lifting the blockade, we had agreed with the Russians to convene a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris to discuss "matters arising out of the situation in Berlin and matters affecting Germany as a whole".

George Kennan, who was then Director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff, was in charge of the planning work in preparation for the upcoming meeting. I was among those who worked with him at that time. We were uncertain as to what it was the Russians wanted to accomplish at the meeting or what they would propose. One possibility was that they might consider, or possibly propose, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Germany and the reunification of Germany. We developed two alternative proposals for consideration by the Western delegation. One was called Plan A and contemplated the phased withdrawal of foreign forces from Germany, the reunification of Germany under free elections and the limitation of German rearmament under four power control. Plan B contemplated no commitment to withdraw Western forces from Germany. It endeavored to go as far as might be practicable within that limitation toward German reunification, the limitation of unilateral controls by the individual occupying powers in their respective zones and the substitution therefore of four power control operating by majority vote, -- except for certain basic limitations

on German rearmament which could be changed only by unanimous agreement among the occupying powers.

It was finally decided to base the Western negotiating position on Plan B and not on Plan A. This was done because few people believed the Russians would in fact agree to any plan requiring the withdrawal of their forces from the Eastern zone. The negotiations completely confirmed this view. General Chuikov, the Soviet High Commissioner of the Eastern Zone, said one day at lunch "anyone who suggests the withdrawal of our forces from Germany is mad. These people hate us". It proved impossible during the negotiations to make any progress at all toward a mitigation of the unilateral control by the Soviet Union of the Eastern zone, toward German reunification or toward the improvement of the situation in Berlin. During that portion of the negotiations devoted to Berlin, the Russians insisted on a continuing veto power of even the most minor details of the administration of the city. Their plan would have given them a permanent veto power over the appointment of janitors in the Berlin Art Museum.

From 1949 up to last year, discussion about German reunification remained pretty well frozen. There was much talk about the objective of reunification through free elections, but no program was envisaged by which this could be brought about. In the meantime the economic and political strengthening of the Federal Republic went ahead apace. It became a member of NATO and the decision was finally made to urge Germany to make its fair contribution in military forces to the common defense.

Last spring George Kennan reopened the discussion on the Western side in his Rieth lectures over the British Broadcasting System. In effect he urged the reconsideration of the basic ideas behind Plan A as opposed to Plan B. His proposals received wide support from the British Labor Party and from the SPD in Germany. They received little support in the United States. Even those of us who had worked on Plan A with Mr. Kennan and agreed with it at

the time subject only to the reservation that there seemed little prospect that the Russians would agree to it - were doubtful that it would be helpful in today's quite different situation. In 1949 the United States still had a monopoly in the atomic field; Germany was not a member of NATO; and a German military contribution was not considered essential to Europe's security. These factors have since changed and withdrawal of Germany from NATO and the withdrawal of United States forces from Germany would today leave Europe in a most insecure position.

Let us leave here our brief review of the historical development of the current situation and turn to the second element that we proposed to explore - the question of what it is the Soviet Union wants to do and intends to do with respect to Germany.

Last November Mr. Krushchev sent us a note dealing with Berlin. In January he sent us a draft of a proposed peace treaty with Germany. What do these documents indicate as to Soviet intentions?

The note on Berlin says that the Soviet Union regards the agreements concerning Berlin arising out of the termination of hostilities as being void. The governmental arrangements set up in Berlin as a result of the agreements and the presence in Berlin of French, British and American troops are illegal and detrimental to Russian interests. He proposes that these troops be withdrawn, that the three Western sectors be made a self-governing free city with international guarantees of its independence and of its access to and from Germany. The Russians have said that while

they are prepared to discuss how and when the withdrawal of Western forces will take place, they will not discuss whether it shall take place. Furthermore, they say a solution of the Berlin question must be found in a plan which provides for the demilitarization of Germany, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Germany, and the withdrawal of both East and West Germany from the Warsaw and NATO alliances.

The Western allies are given six months to think this proposal over and to discuss it, with the Russians, or to negotiate a German peace treaty with a group of 28 nations chosen by the Russians. At the end of that time, if no progress has been made the Russians will move their troops out of Berlin and turn over the control of all traffic, including military traffic between Berlin and West Germany, to the East Germans with whom everyone must deal in the future. Finally, a warning is given that any violation of the frontiers of East Germany will be regarded as aggression against all the Warsaw Pact countries, of which the Soviet Union is one, and will result in appropriate retaliation.

The draft treaty does not provide for German reunification. It contemplates a continuation both of the German Federal Republic and of the German Democratic Republic, at least until they mutually agree between themselves on some form of confederation. It provides for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from both parts of Germany, and the withdrawal of East Germany and West Germany from the Warsaw and NATO alliances. It places limitations upon German military forces and it

places far-reaching prohibitions against political parties, political action and propaganda in any way hostile to the USSR and its associates. In reading the draft treaty, one gets the impression that the USSR may not seriously intend that this treaty be a basis for agreement with the West. As indicated in Krushchev's speech at Tula last Wednesday, it may be designed to form the basis of a treaty of peace by the Communist world with East Germany alone.

From these documents and from the innumerable speeches, articles and statements which issue from the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain we can try to decipher what it is the Russians wish and intend to accomplish. They wish to get United States forces out of Berlin, out of Germany, and, if possible, out of Europe. They wish to get West Germany out of NATO and neutralize its power. They offer very little in return. They offer only the withdrawal of Russian forces from East Germany under conditions designed to make free political life in West Germany virtually impossible and designed to minimize the risk that the East German regime would be overthrown once Russian forces are removed. If we don't negotiate an agreement with them on approximately these terms, they then intend to give the East Germans all the trappings of a sovereign and independent state, to negotiate an independent treaty of peace with them and let them eliminate what they call "the cancer of West Berlin" either by gentle means or by more forceful means.

We all know pretty well what we want. We want a reunified Germany, reunified in a way that permits a normal, responsible and not an imposed, political development for the country as a whole. We want Germany to collaborate in the free world's economic and political life and to contribute to the common defense against aggression. We want the freedom of the Berliners and their access to the rest of the world to be maintained and secured. We want our legitimate rights to be respected. We do not want to be pushed around and hectored by an ugly little man brandishing the threat of attack with nuclear rockets on every third day.

The question, however, is not so much what we want, or who wants it more than the next man; the important question is what we can and should do about it.

We can lump the various things we can do under two headings. One heading can be summarized by the phrase "standing firm"; the other by the word "negotiations".

Obviously standing firm and negotiating are not two opposed things. You can only negotiate successfully if you are prepared to stand firm. You can only command the political support in the Western world necessary to stand firm, if your negotiating position is reasonably clear and understandable.

Let us first look at the various ways in which we can stand firm.

We can be firm in our declarations and united with our allies in the various speeches, notes and statements of policy we make.

This is important. It takes a lot of careful work. It requires a high degree of thought and clarity about what it is we can and should do in action rather than just in statement.

We can refuse to remove our forces from Berlin. We have about eight thousand troops in Berlin; the British and French have smaller numbers. They have large stockpiles of supplies, are shooting no ammunition and can stay indefinitely even if blockaded.

We can institute an airlift. Even if the East Germans attempt to jam our radars enough could be got through to support our forces in Berlin. An airlift, however, could not sustain the economy of Berlin which is now the largest industrial city of Germany. Whether an airlift could long sustain the population even from starvation, let alone sustain its economy, is doubtful. We must also reckon with the possibility that the East Germans, backed by the Russians, may shoot down our transport planes.

If the East Germans refuse to permit either our military convoys or the normal civilian traffic to move freely to and from the West, we can shove aside the East German guards and make them let our convoys go through or themselves initiate shooting to prevent it. I have a hard time, however, visualizing the shoving and pushing that might go on while we attempt to remove roadblocks and repair bridges and force on them the onus of firing the first shot.

We can start an armored column on its way to Berlin with instructions to shoot if it is blocked or shot at. We can back that column up with various increments of additional non-nuclear

force.

We can back up our non-nuclear forces with tactical nuclear weapons. And finally, we can back up our tactical nuclear forces with the full power of our strategic forces.

We can also do a number of things away from the immediate area of Berlin, which can bear importantly on the Berlin situation.

We can reinforce our forces in Europe. We can increase their state of alert and readiness. We can go to various levels of increased mobilization at home.

We can counter a blockade of Berlin with a blockade of East Germany, of the USSR, or the entire Soviet bloc.

At the moment of crisis -- if a blockade has been initiated and we have determined to send an armored convoy on its way -- we can put our Strategic Air Forces on full alert and evacuate our cities, both to indicate the full measure of our determination and to be in the best possible position to survive the likely consequences if the Russians choose to challenge that determination.

Now I have merely been cataloguing the various things it is conceivable that we could do under the heading of standing firm. What it may be wise to do -- what we should do -- what informed public opinion both here and among the peoples of Europe will go along with -- what will commend itself to the conscience of the world -- may be something quite different.

A few general considerations can be advanced on the relationship between these possible actions and what it is wise to do.

In the first place, there is a definite relationship between the nature of the provocation and the course of action which is appropriate and wise. If the provocation is, and appears to the world as being, merely technical, or legalistic, we would hardly be justified in adopting forceful and highly dangerous courses of action. If the provocation is an actual and not merely a technical obstruction to Western military traffic moving to Berlin, more serious measures would be justified. If the provocation is an actual blockade of the civilian population of West Berlin, a far more serious situation would have been created, and far more serious counter-measures would be appropriate. This is so not merely because of the differing support which our actions would receive from public opinion under these differing circumstances. It is also because of the greater credibility to the Russians that a show of determination on our part will be backed up, if necessary, by still stronger measures, if that determination is challenged. The greater the provocation the more credible it becomes to the Russians that we may well follow up forceful measures even with desperate measures. It would seem to me to be most unwise to start to push a convoy through from Helmstedt to Berlin if the provocation has been merely technical, or is restricted to military traffic. We would have much greater public support and a much greater chance of getting through unchallenged by the Russians if we reserve that action for the situation that would exist if it had become clear that the freedom of the two and one-half million

citizens of West Berlin was being jeopardized by an effective blockade directed against them.

The second point is that, if it is at all possible, we should avoid being the first to shoot. The onus of initiating the crisis about Berlin is already the responsibility of the Soviet Union. Let us not fuzz up that responsibility by incurring ourselves the onus of having initiated the shooting -- if it must come to that.

The third point is that the initiation of the use of nuclear weapons, tactical or strategic, is, in my opinion, to be avoided at all cost. If the stakes involved in the Berlin situation, immense as they are, have not justified a higher degree of preparedness in the past, a willingness to make greater sacrifices and to pay higher taxes, and are not interpreted, even now that the Russians have made their intentions reasonably clear, as warranting such action, I can hardly see how they can justify the initiation of a nuclear war.

Let us now turn from the business of standing firm to the business of negotiation.

This part of the problem can be broken down into three interrelated aspects. What can be negotiated about German reunification? What can be negotiated about the mutual withdrawal, thinning out, or limitation of forces in central Europe? What can and should be negotiated about Berlin?

As pointed out earlier, the Soviet draft peace treaty for Germany really says nothing about German reunification. The only position the Russians have taken on reunification is that East and West Germans should sit down together and see what they can work out between themselves. What this amounts to is a way for the Russians to avoid their agreement to work out the problem with the British, the French, and ourselves. There is no

very good way to make them work it out with us.

Let us look at the ideas Mr. Ulbricht has expressed on reunification. He proposes an all-German Council of 100 members selected equally by the parliaments of East and West Germany and an executive organ, called the Praesidium of the Council, whose powers are vague. The Council would appoint Commissions to deal with limits on armaments, financial settlements, foreign trade and cultural matters. The Council would have no power to give directives to the two German states which would remain sovereign. A separate organ under the Council would be asked to draft a constitution and develop preparations for all-German elections.

To accept this would be to recognize the division of Germany into two separate states, and get in return only worthless debating machinery with no powers whatsoever. Reunification may not require immediate free elections but it requires something better than Ulbricht has proposed.

I am inclined to agree with Senator Mansfield that talks between East and West Germans do not need to involve recognition. I would like to see what such talks would come up with. The basic question is how can we give a Central German government any real powers, powers that are not subject to veto by the East Germans, and still have the arrangement acceptable to the East German regime. The dominance of West Germany in numbers and economic strength, but above all, in political strength, is such that the Ulbricht regime could not long survive even the most elementary non-vetoable powers given to a central government. I should think that the most elemental power would be the guarantee of, and the power to enforce, the right of habeas corpus. If such a power were given to the central government, the people in East Germany would be assured that they could not be arbitrarily held in jail. Ulbricht's

control over East Germany would, then, tend to melt whether or not there were free elections. My point is that all kinds of guarantees could be given the East German regime that the central government would not interfere in its local affairs other than to protect people from crass injustice and there still would be every prospect that Ulbricht's rule, and what the communist euphemistically call "the benefits of democratic progress" would be undermined.

I, therefore, see little prospect for agreement on any true reunification unless the other benefits to the USSR of the settlement as a whole are so great as to make it reasonable for them to take the chance and make Ulbricht take the chance that the Ulbricht regime in East Germany would not long survive.

This brings us then to the other benefits that might be offered the Russians in terms of the mutual withdrawal, thinning out or limitation of forces in central Europe.

I happen to think that tactical nuclear weapons add little to our true security or to that of Europe. It is hard to imagine circumstances in which tactical nuclear weapons could be usefully employed in Europe unless backed up by the use of the full power of our strategic nuclear forces. I believe the Russians take a serious view of the possibility that the West Germans might eventually be armed with nuclear weapons. It is, therefore, conceivable that some variation of the Rapacki plan, coupled with an agreement on Germany and Berlin acceptable to us, might form a basis for a German settlement.

The rub, however, is that any plan that involved true German reunification, or even a major risk to the Communists that true reunification would flow from

it, must also provide for the mutual withdrawal of foreign forces from Germany, and the withdrawal of Germany from NATO, if it is to be negotiable with the Russians under today's circumstances. I don't think this is a price which the West, and particularly the West Germans, are prepared to pay for a German settlement. Some think we should. Under today's circumstances I don't think they are right. In any case I do not think we will pay such a price. Therefore, it seems to me that a German settlement involving German reunification has very small prospect of being negotiated at this time.

What is more likely is that the Russians will go forward with their plan to make the German Democratic Republic as sovereign and as permanent as they can. To do this they must attempt to eliminate what they call the cancer of West Berlin. What possibilities there are of negotiating a settlement of the Berlin issue apart from an over-all German settlement Mrs. Dulles has already discussed. I would only like to say that I would not exclude the possibility of bringing the U. N. into the picture, not merely as a forum before which to bring our complaints about Soviet behavior, but also to share the responsibility, through U. N. forces and observers, that the West Berliners remain free.

In conclusion, I should like to make one final point. I see little prospect of weaving through the next twelve months without war and without the surrender of Berlin, unless we combine firmness with great discretion. Basic and irreconcilable positions have been taken by both sides. The prestige of both sides is involved. I am sure that the Soviet Union wants a nuclear war no more than

we do. The stakes involved are immense. The process of action and reaction to be expected over the next year will test the resolution of both sides. It will be comparable to the process of peeling off the successive layers of two onions. At the center of each onion is a kernel of self-knowledge that no stake, even the German stake, is worth a nuclear war. Each side will try to peel off successive layers of the other side's onion of resolution, while trying to prevent the layers being peeled off its own. This is a dangerous game. A misplay can start a chain reaction difficult or impossible to get back under control. I believe, for instance, that the Russians are quite likely to meet an armed convoy with tanks of their own. If our planes are fired on, I think we will fire back. Great care must be used to avoid a misplay. I believe it can be done. It will take the greatest patience and fortitude. God wish us luck.

CONSULTATION ON THE BERLIN CRISIS:
A SUMMARY REPORT

March 6, 1959

Sponsored by the Church Peace Union

The participants in the Consultation agreed that a summary report, drawn up on a non-attribution basis, might be made available for limited distribution to interested persons in the State Department and in Congress. It should be noted that those participating in the Consultation did so on a personal, rather than on a representative basis. It should also be understood that arguments were sometimes introduced not for purposes of advocacy but for reasons of exploring all possible alternatives. The following remarks, thus, should be accepted as a contribution to the general discussion of the Berlin situation; and not in any sense as the "findings" of the Consultation as a whole. Indeed, no effort was made to arrive at group consensus. The opening remarks of Mr. Paul H. Nitze are summarized under his name with his permission.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF MR. PAUL H. NITZE

Mr. Nitze proposed to deal with his subject under three broad headings: Soviet motivations and objectives; the Western position analyzed in terms of "standing firm"; and the Western position analyzed in terms of negotiations.

I. Soviet Motivations and Objectives:

Soviet motivation with respect to Berlin might include the following elements: Soviet growth in military capacity leading to a new sense of confidence and drive; the Soviet belief that the Western powers are capable of division on the issue of Berlin in particular, and perhaps Germany and European security in general; Nikita Khrushchev's internal problems in dealing with anti-party groups and possibly with the Chinese making it particularly desirable to achieve a political victory at this time; the continuing potential for unrest in the satellites indicating the advisability of "nailing down" the status quo and vesting the East German regime with legitimacy; and finally fear of the consequences of West German nuclear rearmament.

Soviet objectives, developed in the light of these motivations, ought to be viewed in two categories: minimal or defensive objectives; and maximal or offensive objectives. Soviet defensive objectives include the consolidation of the position of the satellites, particularly that of the East German Democratic Republic and thus securing Russia's Western frontiers; the elimination of the "cancerous tumor" of Berlin; the removal of the necessity to give nuclear arms to the satellites in consequence of the nuclear armament of West Germany.

Soviet offensive, or maximal objectives, probably include: a concentrated effort to divide the Western powers, to inflict a serious political defeat on the United States, to force US military strength from Germany and ultimately from the European continent leading finally to the

neutralization of Europe. It is possible that an important side objective might be that of riveting Western attention on the flanks (Berlin and the Far East) as a prerequisite to decisive moves in the soft center (the Middle East and South Asia).

In all probability they mean to do just what they say. They expect to negotiate a treaty with the East German government, to withdraw their troops from East Berlin, to turn over to the East German regime the responsibility of monitoring Western military traffic to Berlin. In all of this, there is the strong implication of a blockade, both military and civilian. Should they blockade, they are in a position to make our effective intervention extremely difficult.

Mr. Nitze suggested that the Western response be viewed in two dimensions: the ways and means of "standing firm"; and the prospects for meaningful negotiations. Obviously standing firm and negotiating are not two opposed things. You can only negotiate successfully if you are prepared to stand firm. You can only command the political support in the Western world necessary to stand firm if your negotiating position is reasonably clear and understandable.

II. The Ways and Means of Standing Firm

This includes a number of possible postures. It includes the things you say -- but what you say must be geared to what you are prepared to do. It includes the refusal to move. The 11,000 troops in Western Berlin could be indefinitely supplied by airlift if necessary. It is unlikely however that the airlift could sustain the two and a half million civilians in Western Berlin. Standing firm might include shoving aside the Communist troops if the land corridors to Berlin are cut, though it is difficult to see how sheer physical push could prevail against massed tanks! It might include sending through an armed convoy, or an armored column. Standing firm might also include a number of actions remote from the actual Berlin area. European forces might be placed on an increased alert. We might move to higher levels of mobilization at home. Surely it would involve public statements to the effect that there will be no tax reductions in 1960. Counter-blockade of East Germany, the satellites, the Soviet Union and China might be prepared. And finally, to support and make thoroughly credible any show of force in the Berlin area, American cities might be evacuated.

In considering such measures it is extremely important to strike the proper relationship between the degree of provocation and the seriousness of the measures taken in response to it. As long as the blockade is only a threat, we can do no more than take preparatory steps. Once the Soviets move to specific actions, we must tailor the response carefully. Purely technical actions -- such as giving the East German Communists monitoring responsibilities at the check-points into Berlin -- do not constitute serious provocation. If ground passage is denied to military convoys, the appropriate response is the airlift rather than an armored column. If the blockade is extended to the civilian population, we shall be confronted with a truly serious provocation demanding an equally serious response. Still, everything possible must be done to avoid shooting first. This may be extremely difficult but we should try. Finally, the use of nuclear weapons should be avoided at all costs.

III. The Prospects for Meaningful Negotiations

There are three possible subjects for negotiation. The first is the reunification of Germany. It should be made clear that the Russian draft treaty for Germany does not deal with reunification. Quite to the contrary, it fixes the independent sovereignty of the two Germanies. It further provides for the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the resignation of West Germany from NATO and East Germany from the Warsaw Pact. Ulbricht's proposals, too, confirm that the objective of the Communists is not reunification -- which indeed they want no part of -- but international recognition of the present division of Germany. For our part, we must ask: how much do we want reunification, and how much are we willing to pay to get it?

The second subject for possible negotiations includes schemes for European military security. Foremost among these is the proposal to de-nuclearize Central Europe. To purchase this might not be too expensive for the United States. Certainly in terms of strategy five years from now, tactical nuclear weapons in Central Europe will not be of great importance. As to proposals for "thinning out" troops on either side, we must realize the built-in inequity of a percentage reduction in a situation in which the West is already completely outmanned by the Soviets. Finally, there is the proposal for the total withdrawal from Europe of Soviet and American forces. While attractive to us in 1949, it would mean today forfeiting our military responsibilities for the defense of Western Europe. Moreover, it is virtually inconceivable that the Soviets would be willing to withdraw their troops from the East European satellites.

The final subject of possible negotiations is Berlin itself. The West wants to preserve the status quo and wants the Soviet to cancel its threat to isolate the Western powers in Berlin. The prospects for a negotiated settlement look bleak because there is very little that we can give them in order to achieve a stabilization of the situation favorable to the West. Incidentally, a UN guarantee of, and presence in, West Berlin in exchange for the removal of our forces would presage disaster, and would be so interpreted by the West Berliners.

DISCUSSION

I. SOVIET MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES

1. The "Cancerous Tumor" of Berlin

The question was raised: shouldn't we place high on the list of Soviet and East German objectives the desire of the East Germans to close the frontier between East and West Berlin?

A differing view held that free access to West Berlin might provide for the East German regime a useful pacifier. As long as this escape hatch remained available to discontented East Germans, tensions probably would not rise to the point of explosion.

It was conceded, however, that an important component of Soviet motivation was the desire to increase the viability of the East German

regime. Ulbricht was close to Khrushchev. Undoubtedly on his recent trip to Moscow, he protested: how can I proceed without further help from you, without a solution to the problem of Berlin: without at least having my regime made "legitimate"? But the decision to foment a crisis over Berlin was not taken exclusively to favor the position of a satellite. It was also necessary that it fit in with a general strategy. As to the nature of overall Soviet strategy, Soviet experts themselves were divided. Some emphasized Soviet maximal and offensive objectives; others emphasized Soviet concern to stabilize and consolidate their defense position so as to be able to give full attention to the fulfillment of the Seven Year Plan.

2. Soviet Fears of Red China

Was it not possible that the Soviets felt an urgency about the German situation because of their fear of what Red China will do in the future? They were notoriously long-term planners. They might be envisaging a situation, say 15 years from now, when the Red Chinese would threaten to pour over the frontier into the empty spaces of Siberia. Surely they didn't want both flanks exposed. We might be able to move far in the direction of an acceptable solution if we could give them stability in Eastern Europe. It was not inconceivable that if we recognized the East German government, they might give us adequate guarantees for a free West Berlin.

Some dissent from this point of view was expressed.

3. Soviet Fears of a Remilitarized Germany

The possibility was aired that the Soviets were bringing matters to a head at this time to prevent a West German military build-up. The autumn maneuvers of the West German army were after all simultaneous with the initiation of the Berlin crisis.

But, it was pointed out, the Soviets need have no fear of a German army -- certainly not in the light of current Soviet military strength. Still, they might have thought through the logic of missile strategy. They might feel that while Germany itself could never be a threat to them again, a threat might materialize if German strength and real estate were combined with US strength -- that is, if US IRBMs were established on German soil under NATO auspices. Therefore, their intent might be to extract West Germany from NATO.

It was held significant that the one subject on which both Mikoyan and Khrushchev seemed to display considerable emotion was that of German rearmament. They appeared genuinely concerned at the prospect of a Germany armed with nuclear weapons -- whether in or outside NATO. It was not that they felt militarily threatened by a future German force, but that a nuclearized Germany might well be a threat to the peace. It might start something which could not be contained.

II. THE POLICY OF "STANDING FIRM"

1. Our General Military Posture: Limited Nuclear Capability vs. Conventional Capability

When analyzing the Berlin situation, it was important, suggested one conferee, that we remained aware of the larger context. Our overall aim was the achievement of a just and lasting peace. Necessary to this was a dependable disarmament agreement. We had a better chance of moving toward this objective if we could negotiate from relative strength rather than from relative weakness. Three elements of strength were important. First, we must have the capability, after we have been hit, to strike back and knock out the enemy. Second, the potential aggressor must know that we have this capability. Third, we must have the capacity to fight effectively in a conventional war. There was serious disagreement as to whether we had the first capability, and, of course, without the first we did not have the second. But there was no one who believed that we had the third. The American people simply had not been informed of the dangers we confront and the seriousness of the present crisis. Meanwhile we continued to cut our conventional forces. It was foolhardy to rely on tactical nuclear weapons. You could not put thermometers on nuclear weapons so as to limit their use to those of a certain degree of magnitude. We were confronted today with two equally unsatisfactory alternatives. Either we had to rely on nuclear weapons, since we did not have conventional forces adequate to handle the situation; or we were obliged to enter negotiations in which we could only lose more than we gained. The projections of Shepley and Wohlstetter, in recent issues of Life and Foreign Affairs respectively, would prove to be correct unless we took immediate steps to strengthen our conventional and missile capability. As long as this was not done we might expect that events manipulated by the Soviets would continue to dictate our policies.

A dissenting view noted that it is impossible to balance the conventional forces of the Soviets; we must rely on tactical nuclear weapons to correct this imbalance.

But, it was pointed out by another participant, in actual fact we did not have an army equipped and prepared to use tactical nuclear weapons. And if we did have such an army, there would be no way of controlling the situation so as to prevent a limited nuclear war from developing into an unlimited nuclear war. With reference to NATO, it was possible for us to develop with our allies an adequate conventional "shield" which would make a Soviet move into Western Europe enormously costly. But if one had no more than we have at present, one could not move at all without bringing nuclear weapons into the picture. Short of this, there was nothing to do but give. Under such circumstances, negotiations could not be anything but successful for the opponent. It was ridiculous to say at one and the same time: we won't budge an inch, and we won't recruit another man. The need was to develop our strength quickly so that we could put adequate force behind our statement that we would not budge another inch.

It was proposed that two facts ought to be remembered when discussing the limited nuclear war thesis. First, the Soviets had these weapons, too. They combined them with their overwhelmingly superior conven-

ional forces. And there was nothing to indicate that a large tactical nuclear capability wasn't superior to a small tactical nuclear capability. Second, limited nuclear war was vastly more expensive than conventional war. It required more airfields which had to be hardened. It demanded the dispersal and hardening of logistics and supply lines. The terrible devastation in prospect for Europe must also be calculated. Tactical nuclear weapons could break up a massed conventional attack. But they could also punch a hole in a static, linear defense. Thus, one's defense must be highly mobile and established in great depth. It was for this reason that devastation would be enormous, covering an extremely broad area.

The question was asked: aren't manpower requirements for nuclear war as great, and perhaps greater, than for conventional war?

The opinion was expressed that this was probably the case, though, of course, no one had fought a nuclear war. Current projections indicated that although the division front would probably be twice as wide as in World War II, it would be necessary for adequate dispersal that "the line" be four times greater in depth. We might also expect that replacements would be greater since a single nuclear hit would probably take out an entire battle group.

A somewhat differing view held that the use of nuclear weapons was not entirely precluded under current circumstances. By a rapid and limited nuclear response, we might force the aggressor to rapid recalculations. That is, one might be able to hit an aggressor fast with one or two nuclear weapons, threatening all-out nuclear war if he did not desist, and thereby force his capitulation. But it should be clear that in the Berlin situation, the military liabilities were enormous. It was further noted that our present untenable situation was not to be blamed in a partisan way on the present administration. Our present inadequate military posture had its origins in policies begun under the Democrats.

Another participant agreed that prior to 1953 we did in fact depend upon a policy of "massive retaliation" though we never used the term. This made some sense in the years when we had a nuclear capability and the Russians did not. Toward the end of the Democratic administration the shortcomings of this military posture were recognized. The inexcusable thing about the present administration was that it brought back the doctrine of "massive retaliation" precisely at the time when it had outlived its usefulness.

2. Appropriate Military Measures and Counter Measures in the Berlin Situation

Several participants noted the necessity to analyze carefully the question: what level of provocation justifies what level of response? For example, how important -- that is, how provocative -- would we consider the signing of a peace treaty between the Soviets and the East German regime?

One point of view held that this was not serious. It meant nothing. It would be a paper agreement between a dictator and his stooge confirming what was already a fact. The ultimatum issued last November concerning Berlin was infinitely more serious. Again it was emphasized that it would be inappropriate to take serious steps unless the provocation were commensurate. It would not be particularly serious, for example, if East

German Communists were to take over Russian duties at the check-points into Berlin. Incidentally, Mr. Dulles got into difficulty in West Germany with respect to his proposal to deal with East German officials as the surrogates of Soviet officials in the matter of checking transit documents, because there was confusion in translation. What he had described as "dealing" with the East Germans ("behandling") was erroneously translated "negotiating" with the East Germans ("verhandlung").

The question was posed: what counter measures should be employed in the event of a blockade?

One conferee stated that we should try everything before resorting to an armored column. Certainly, an airlift. But if everything else failed, an armored column would have to be tried. What else could we do?

Several conferees emphasized that we should counter a conventional blockade with conventional weapons. We should not run the risk of blowing up the world for the sake of Berlin.

Considerable attention was given to the possibility of an airlift. Such a response to blockade was an irreducible minimum. It could service the military garrisons in West Berlin. It might even be able to sustain the civilian population for a limited time. It was suggested that an airlift was preferable by far to punching through an armored column. For an airlift meant that to interdict the lift, the Soviets would be required to fire the first shot. An intervention by land meant that we would be required to fire the first shot. We ought to try the lift if only to find out whether they wanted war or not.

3. Playing for Time and Psychological Advantage

One participant affirmed that the Soviets were out to nail down some political advantages during this period when they had a relative military advantage. We had to recognize, however, that it was not easy to translate military advantages into political advantages. For to do this, you had to be prepared to act on your military superiority, and the other side must know that you were prepared so to act. When we had the H-Bomb and the Russians did not, we tried to think of ways to translate this military advantage into political gains, and it was extremely difficult. The weaker side could do many things to parry the advantage of the other. It could play for time. It could play on opinion, mobilizing sympathy for its position. Even though operating from a position of military weakness, it was still possible to come through.

Standing firm under such circumstances meant that you took measures not to be thrown out. You stayed. If your military convoys were blocked, you went to the airlift. If civilian supply conduits were cut, you expanded the airlift. An airlift, even to service the civilian population, would not be impossible. Of course, it would mean seriously reducing the level of the Berlin economy -- putting West Berlin back on a subsistence basis. But much could be done. There were large stockpiles in Berlin to begin with. Considerable time could be bought.

Meanwhile you could start immediately to strengthen your position. Indeed, there seemed no alternative to an unsatisfactory outcome

unless we started to mobilize today. At any rate, it might be possible to draw things out for two or three years. If at the end you were obliged to withdraw, you could evacuate -- including the evacuation of that part of the civilian population which wanted to come out.

We must avoid World War III at all costs. But we might well remember that the Soviets had as much interest in avoiding it as we did. This meant we were in an unprecedented situation. Each side contested for its interests, but in an environment in which neither side was able to resort to the ultimate sanction against the other. No political game had been played out in this environment before. It was enormously dangerous. Each side would be testing the resolution of the other. If we were fired on, we would fire back, recognizing, however, even as the Russians recognize, that a misplay could start a chain reaction which neither side would be able to get back under control. Though dangerous, there was no reason we could not pursue our interests within this environment.

4. Cutting our Losses if Defeat is Unavoidable

The possibility of military or political defeat in Berlin received careful attention. Several participants declared that we must use defeat to see that the posture of weakness which produced it never recurred. In this sense, it might be better to accept military defeat than political defeat without a military contest. Thus, if the prospect of a defeat in one form or another were unavoidable, we should attempt to engineer the situation in such a way that the Soviets would be obliged to push us out by force. In this way we stood a chance of deriving from defeat a stimulus to renew our efforts, and so avoid future defeats.

But a contrasting view held that such a humiliation, rather than coalescing NATO, might blow it apart. Military defeat would be psychologically devastating.

A third view suggested that, rather than precipitate a military conflict by attempting to push an armored column through to Berlin, our posture should be one of firmness -- firm refusal to leave Berlin. If this resulted in a blockade and ultimately created the necessity to withdraw, it would be a humiliation which we could contain, a humiliation which then might stimulate us, rather than demoralize us.

The Consultation was reminded that, of course, there was no easy way out. To try to avoid defeat, we made threats and struck poses. But should this not work and we were required to withdraw, the very efforts to avoid defeat would serve to maximize the humiliation.

One conferee urged that before accepting the humiliation of a defeat, whether military or political -- which might after all lead to a rapid series of maneuvers against other vulnerable areas such as Iran -- we had better spell out all the possible alternatives which might conceivably be negotiated. This was not appeasement, but the search for the least unpleasant of a series of unpleasant alternatives.

III. THE PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATION

1. The Devaluation of the Diplomatic Art

Participants were reminded that there were two main streams in Mr. Nitze's remarks. We had ventilated thoroughly the first, namely the content of "firmness". We had said, however, too little about the second, negotiation. Perhaps there were three reasons for this lack of adequate emphasis on the diplomatic dimension of the problem. First, there was the obvious imperative of stepping up our military strength. Second, the administration erroneously emphasized the legal aspects of the crisis which led to the conclusion that any steps toward legitimizing the East German regime undermined our legal position in Berlin. Third, we were the victims of a mythology which assumed that there were two kinds of government, good and evil; governments which kept agreements and governments which did not. Our mythology also assumed that every negotiation carried within it the corruption of appeasement.

We needed to return to the time-honored criteria of statecraft which approached the diplomatic task, not in terms of the goodness or the evil of the competitor, but rather by asking whether or not there existed interests on both sides which could be mutually implemented by agreement, and thus become the basis of a mutually advantageous negotiation. For example, should we not seriously study the Rapacki Plan for establishing a denuclearized zone in Central Europe to see if here we could not find a negotiable agreement which would implement the interests of both sides?

Of course, one of our problems, the conferee continued, was that for the first time we were required to enter a difficult diplomatic struggle on the basis, not of relative superiority of power, but on the basis of parity or even relative military weakness. Extracting some kind of quid pro quo was certainly better than total surrender. Macmillan evidently felt that there was some point in negotiating. Many felt that we ought to overhaul our machinery for negotiation. Stevenson had suggested, for example, some means of continuous contact. Fulbright had recommended probing the Soviets every six months. This ought to be diplomacy by professionals, however -- not by Congressional amateurs, however well-meaning their attempts. What we needed was something comparable to the overhauling of our diplomatic machinery which took place in 1815.

2. But Can You Negotiate With the Soviets -- and On Berlin?

Considerable discussion flowed from the above remarks. It was pointed out that as long as the West looked on negotiation as a means to the solution of problems and the Soviet regarded negotiations as simply another instrument with which to continue the Cold War, it was perhaps fruitless to give serious consideration to negotiated settlements.

Another participant noted that, of course, the Soviets would not be negotiating for a settlement that we would consider equitable. After all, they stood an excellent chance of gaining their minimum objectives without negotiating. They would look on negotiations in this situation as an effort to maximize their gains. For our part, we would want to negotiate in order to cut our losses; in order, that is, to produce a result somewhat more favorable to our interests than we would get if we did not negotiate.

It was pointed out that an agreement did not mean settlement to the Soviets; but it did to us. This made for an incompatibility of the objectives of the two sides in negotiations.

Another participant recalled that situations have arisen in which both sides gained from negotiations: for example, the 1948-49 Berlin Blockade, Austria, and Korea.

But what were the Russians after? Were their aims negotiable? It was conceivable that the Russians were today following the advice which Churchill gave us ten years ago: bring matters to a head while there was still time. If this were the case, then their aims were not negotiable.

Still, responded another participant, if the Russians were interested in preventive war, the last thing they would do as a preparatory step would be to stir up trouble in Berlin, thus arousing the West.

The view was expressed that the Soviets, of course, could be more flexible in the negotiating situation than we, since for them it was a one-man show. But other than this, there were no fundamental roadblocks to negotiations with the Soviets. The real question was: which side had the better bargaining position?

Another participant took the position that the present situation did not seem susceptible to negotiation. The objective of the Soviet Union was the stabilization and legitimization of the status quo in Europe. This meant the explicit division of Europe into two mutually exclusive spheres. Berlin was an obstacle in this undertaking. Though in a negotiated settlement one might arrange, let us say, to cut off the flow of refugees from East to West Berlin, the problem of the Western presence in Berlin, located as it was one hundred miles inside the Communist world, would always remain a threat to the stabilization of the status quo. The Soviets would still have every interest in forcing us out. There thus seemed to be no solution but to stay, not giving an inch.

This alternative, suggested another participant, had to be weighed against one's minimum position in a negotiation. That is, what was the worst position which might be acceptable to us in a negotiation with the Russians on Berlin? First, a recognition of the division of Germany into two parts. This, of course, simply meant accepting the de facto situation. But we could not force this position on the West Germans. However, if the negotiations continued over a long period of time, with the pressures increasing on the West's position in Berlin, West Germany might finally agree to such recognition. Second, a denuclearized zone and perhaps a thinning out of troops. In return for these concessions, what could we get by way of assurances that West Berlin would remain free? We could demand extraterritorial status for the corridor to Berlin as the price of our recognition of the East German government. As between "holding" (that is, standing firm) and "negotiating", (that is, giving a good deal in return for a concession difficult to guarantee) it would probably be preferable to hold.

3. Some Specific Issues

a. West German Attitudes Toward Reunification

A question was raised concerning West German attitudes toward

hard core Communists impervious to Western influence.

Still, were there not advantages to be derived from the fact that the meetings of the Council including East and West Germans would presumably be covered by the news media in each part of Germany? The difficulty now was that East Germans who had contact with the West must remain inarticulate when they returned.

d. Berlin as a Free City

If Berlin put us truly in an impossible situation, one conferee observed, we had better get out. But the real question was, what price do we have to pay to make our position more comfortable? What price to gain safer and more assured access to Berlin? Was there any possibility that we could negotiate an agreement making West Berlin a "free city", free indeed to exercise the right to invite American troops to stay?

A question was raised concerning the utility of a UN presence in or guarantee of Berlin.

One respondent suggested that to get nothing more than a UN guarantee in exchange for the withdrawal of our troops would be accepted by the West Berliners as a sell-out.

Another took the view that it would be reckless to base the freedom of West Berlin only on a UN guarantee. For infractions of that freedom could be so "fuzzed up" by the Soviets that it would be difficult -- if not impossible -- to mobilize a two-third vote in the General Assembly necessary to UN action in fulfillment of its guarantee.

With this, there was concurrence by another participant who suggested that to wait for the UN to fulfill its guarantee to keep Berlin free would be the end of the show. But even Khrushchev did not suggest anything as irresponsible as that. He suggested a free city guarantee by the four powers in addition to which the UN might also offer a guarantee. To implement our guarantee, it would be possible to parachute a battalion into Berlin.

But, the question was raised, how credible would such a prospect be? If we withdraw 10,000 men now -- men already in Berlin, stationed there -- would anyone believe we might return by parachute drop in an emergency?

e. The Problem of Seizing the Initiative

It was noted by several that one of the strengths of the Soviet position was that it constantly took the initiative, placing us on the defensive. Can't we put them on the defensive in some areas? Why could we not tell them that on the day the Soviets unilaterally signed a peace treaty with the East Germans, on that day we would put nuclear weapons in the hands of the West Germans. Why not find out what the Soviets would be willing to pay to avoid our transfer of nuclear weapons to the West Germans? We might also consider what we might purchase with a threat to exercise economic warfare against them.

reunification. There seemed to be evidence that it was not an important issue for the West Germans.

The attention of the Consultation was called to a recent study in which soundings were taken of 100 representative parliamentarians in West Germany. Two interesting facts were revealed. First, it appeared that there was virtually no sympathy for reviving West German great power status. Second, seven out of ten members of the Bundestag said that reunification was the most important political issue today, though Adenauer put it always second in importance to the successful integration of West Germany with West Europe.

One participant asked for appreciation of West Germany's ambiguous position. There were 18 million Germans now living under a Communist regime. No one in West Germany could publicly support a policy which would "let them down." "Reunification" was tantamount to "liberation." But a confederation would move away from liberation, not toward it, for it would stabilize the status quo inasmuch as it would proffer recognition to the East German government. (Incidentally, even if East and West Germany could be unified, this would not settle the issue of "reunification." Agitation for genuine reunification would then begin in earnest -- that is, agitation for the return of the Eastern Provinces. Germans did not refer to the Russian Zone as East Germany, but as Central Germany.) The CDU could not accept a two-Germany deal since the opposition would tag it as being against reunification. This was why the West Germans tell us: we can't make the proposals. You must -- so that we won't have to take the blame. It was also true that many West Germans would prefer to keep the issue on ice. For there were serious disadvantages in reunification: the expense of lifting East Germany to the present level of the Federal Republic; and the ill effects reunification might have on Germany's relations with West Europe.

b. Closing the East-West Berlin Border

Several participants thought the problem of the exodus of East Germans through Berlin a negotiable issue. Some 200,000 annually have left the German Democratic Republic. If we could respond to the fears and the claims of the East German regime on this issue, we might get a viable quid pro quo.

But, suggested another participant, if the exodus of refugees were such a pressing problem, why haven't the East Germans taken steps to curtail it? Perhaps we were over-emphasizing the seriousness of this problem for them.

Another conferee, though endorsing the advisability of negotiations, felt it would be unwise to close the border between East and West.

c. Confederation

The question was raised: might the creation of a confederation, even under Soviet terms, set in motion irresistible forces which ultimately would play to the advantage of the West? Fifty selected West Germans would have intimate contact with fifty from East Germany.

The view was expressed that the East Germans obviously would be

Another participant agreed that this strategy might be useful, but noted that Western policies interdicting the flow of goods to the Soviet bloc had required the bloc to become virtually autarkic. They were invulnerable to economic pressures.

In the area of gaining the diplomatic initiative, a recent suggestion by Mr. Roscoe Drummond was recalled. Khrushchev had insisted the East German regime was a government based on popular support. Why not propose that Mr. Khrushchev's contention be verified by a popular referendum, following the successful outcome of which we would be glad to endorse the confederation idea?

A differing view noted that if such a vote were held, the East Germans would assume that the Communist regime would continue after the vote. They would therefore play it safe and vote for the Communists. It would probably result in a 95% vote for the Ulbricht regime.